

Message Text

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TAGS: NASA, TSPA, MA, US

SUBJECT: NASA MEETING WITH DIRECTOR OF P&T

BEGIN SUMMARY: WALTER LA FLEUR, CHIEF, NETWORK OPERATIONS DIVISION AT GODDARD SPACE FLIGHT CENTER, WILLIAM EDELIN, NASA STATION DIRECTOR, AND DCM MET WITH ELOI RAPIERA, DIRECTOR OF P&T ON AUGUST 13 TO PROVIDE LATTER WITH LA FLEUR'S IMPRESSIONS ON PROGRESS OF MALAGASIZATION AT STATION. RAPIERA NOTED THAT P&T HAD NOT YET BEEN OFFICIALLY DESIGNATED AS COOPERATING AGENCY BY DIRECTOR GENERAL OF GOVT BUT THAT HE WOULD BE PLEASED TO HAVE DISCUSSIONS ON PRELIMINARY BASIS WITH GROUP. RAPIERA SEEMED TO APPRECIATE DIFFICULTIES OF PASSING CONTROL OF STATION OVER TO P&T, PARTICULARLY SEARCH FOR QUALIFIED MANAGER-TECHNICIANS. RAPIERA AGREED TO MAKE A VISIT TO STATION WITH SEVERAL OF HIS STAFF IN NEAR FUTURE. END SUMMARY.

1. AFTER COMPLIMENTARY GREETINGS AND USUAL INTRODUCTORY REMARKS, MR. RAPIERA INDICATED THAT P&T WAS NOT AT THIS TIME OFFICIALLY DESIGNATED BY HIS GOVT AS COOPERATING

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AGENCY TO WORK WITH NASA STATION, BUT HE WAS PREPARED

TO DISCUSS IN PRELIMINARY WAY SOME OF PROBLEMS CONCERNED WITH MALAGASIZATION OF STATION. HE INDICATED THAT DIRECTOR GENERAL OF GOVT COL. ROLAND RABETAFIKA HAD YET TO APPROVE P&T'S DESIGNATION AS COOPERATING AGENCY TO WORK WITH NASA.

2. LA FLEUR BEGAN BY INDICATING SOME OF THE STEPS THAT HAD BEEN MADE AT STATION TOWARDS MALAGASIZATION: INCREASE SINCE MARCH TO 208 MALAGASY EMPLOYEES, ONGOING TRAINING PROGRAMS, AND RECENT APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY DIRECTOR STEVEN STOMPF, WHO IS SPECIALIST IN TRAINING AND HAS HAD EXPERIENCE IN MADRID IN NATIONALIZATION OF STATION THERE. RAPIERA QUERIED AT THIS POINT AS TO AVAILABILITY OF TRAINING FOR P&T EMPLOYEES OF TYPE PRESENTLY BEING GIVEN AT STATION. IT WAS EXPLAINED THAT TRAINING CURRENTLY UNDER WAY WAS PRIMARILY FOR LOWER LEVEL TECHNICIANS AND THAT KIND OF PERSONNEL P&T AND NASA WOULD HAVE TO RECRUIT WOULD BE TECHNICALLY QUALIFIED MANAGERS WHO WOULD NEED TO BE TRAINED IN U.S. AND AT OTHER STATIONS ABROAD. IT WAS ALSO EXPLAINED TO HIM THAT THIS TRAINING WOULD BE PRIMARILY MANAGERIAL RATHER THAN TECHNICAL.

3. SOME OF THE PROBLEMS OF MANAGING NASA STATION WERE DISCUSSED AT LENGTH. RAPIERA SEEMED TO UNDERSTAND DIFFICULTIES IN TRAINING TECHNICALLY QUALIFIED MANAGERS TO HANDLE INTERFACE BETWEEN STATIONS AND TO HANDLE INTERFACE BETWEEN DIFFERENT COORDINATE ELEMENTS OF STATION HERE. RAPIERA SAID THAT HE THOUGHT SUCH TRAINING PERIOD WOULD PROBABLY TAKE 5 OR EVEN 6 YEARS. WHEN IT WAS EXPLAINED TO HIM THAT PROGRAM WAS TO PHASE OUT BENDIX PARTICIPATION AT STATION IN LITTLE MORE THAN 2 YEARS, HE INDICATED THAT THIS WAS A VERY SHORT TIME FRAME.

4. LA FLEUR ALSO EXPLAINED TO RAPIERA THAT IT WAS NOT INTENDED THAT BENDIX, AT END OF 2-1/2 YEAR TRANSITION PERIOD, WOULD SUDDENLY TURN OVER OPERATING RESPONSIBILITY TO P&T. THE PROCESS WAS EXPLAINED TO BE ONE THAT IS GRADUAL WITH P&T, IN PLANNED PHASES, MOVING INTO ALL AREAS OF STATION OPERATION. HE WAS TOLD THAT THERE WOULD BE TIMES WHEN PARTS OF STATION WOULD BE SUPERVISED BY P&T PERSONNEL, POSSIBLY WITH AMERICAN SUBORDINATES, AND THAT

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REVERSE WAS ALSO POSSIBLE. HE ACCEPTED THIS EXPLANATION POSITIVELY AND SAID HE THOUGHT IT WAS REASONABLE APPROACH.

5. IN DISCUSSING SOME OF COMPLEXITIES OF STATION ORGANIZATION, IT WAS SUGGESTED TO RAPIERA THAT IT WOULD BE MUCH EASIER TO DISCUSS STATION ORGANIZATION AT STATION WITH AID OF STATION'S ORGANIZATION CHARTS. HE WAS THEN EXTENDED INVITATION TO VISIT STATION AT HIS CONVENIENCE

WITH DCM. HE SAID HE WOULD BE HAPPY TO VISIT STATION AND ASKED IF HE COULD BRING SEVERAL OF HIS ENGINEERS WITH HIM. HE AGREED TO CALL DCM TO ARRANGE A VISIT TO STATION SOME TIME DURING WEEK OF AUGUST 19.

6. RAPIERA CONCLUDED BY SAYING THAT HE HOPED BOTH DESIGNATION OF P&T AS COOPERATING AGENCY AND OVERALL NASA STATION AGREEMENT WOULD BE SETTLED SOON TO ENABLE BOTH NASA AND P&T TO BEGIN WORKING ON DIFFICULT PROBLEM OF RECRUITING APPROPRIATE PERSONNEL TO FULFILL PLAN FOR MALAGASIZATION OF STATION.

7. EMBASSY COMMENT: GENERAL TENOR OF MEETING WAS POSITIVE BUT RAPIERA'S CAVEAT ON ABSENCE OF AGREEMENTS CLEARLY IMPORTANT POINT TO HIM. RAPIERA'S OBSERVATION ON 5-YEAR TRANSITION PERIOD SHOULD BE SEEN AS TECHNICAL RATHER THAN POLITICAL ONE. U.S. SIDE SHOULD KEEP SIGHTS ON TARGET DATE OF END OF 1976 AS SPECIFIED IN DRAFT AGREEMENTS ON STATION NOW UNDER NEGOTIATION WITH GOMR.

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